

TO: Commissioner Michael Gongora, Chair

Members of the Sustainability Committee

Maui Goodbeer – Appointed by Commissioner Jerry Libbin
Lanette Sobel – Appointed by Commissioner Jorge Exposito
Debra Leibowitz – Appointed by Commissioner Deede Weithorn
Liliam Furst – Appointed by Commissioner Jonah Wolfson
Luiz Rodrigues – Appointed by Commissioner Ed Tobin
Gabriole Van Bryce – Appointed by Commissioner Michael Gongora
Mitch Novick – Appointed by Mayor Matti Herrera Bower

DATE:

July 19, 2011

SUBJECT: MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING OF JULY 19, 2011

The meeting of the Sustainability Committee was held on Tuesday, July 19, 2011.

The attendees were as follows: Committee members: Committee Chair Commissioner Michael Gongora, Maui Goodbeer, Gabriole Van Bryce, Liliam Furst, Mitch Novick, and Luiz Rodrigues.

Absentees: Lanette Sobel and Debra Leibowitz

City Staff: Fred Beckmann, Public Works Director; Lisa Botero, Environmental Manager; Elizabeth Wheaton, Environmental Specialist; and Kevin Crowder, Economic Development Director, John Oldenburg, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreational Department.

<u>Minutes</u>

1. Minutes review. Lily Furst asked if a survey of the recycling bin contents has been conducted to assess the success of the current ROW recycling program. Fred Beckmann explained that there is contamination and a lack of consistency. Ms. Furst would like the City to investigate methods to improve recycling rates in City Right of Ways (ROW) and parks. Luiz Rodrigues stated that improved recycling signage should be developed. Ms. Furst inquired about how the City addresses pollution entering storm water system. Mr. Beckmann explained that each catch basin has a pollution control box and the first inch of water must be treated. Public Works Department is looking into new technology and is willing to test alternatives. The Department is willing to consider a free installation and demonstration of Eddie Lopez Technologies devices at select commercial locations to test the product's effectiveness. The concern is the devices may become clogged in commercial areas due to the high volume of pedestrian traffic, which could present flooding issues when debris is impeding flow. Motion to approve minutes Mitch Novick. Seconded by Gabriole Van Bryce. Passed unanimously.

2. Natural Resources & Ecosystem Management

a) Organic Green Solutions (OGS). Andrew Boshears provided the Committee with an

overview of the company. He explained that OGS is a sustainable land management company. Stormwater runoff picks up debris, fertilizers, sediment and deposits these pollutants untreated into the bay. Fertilizers cause plants to grow unnaturally and become more susceptible to pests, thus requiring pesticide use. OGS uses organics to improve the functionality and quality of soil and reduce pesticide use. Eric Disbrow has founded a statewide Co-op, Sunshine State Biomass Co-op, which converts biomass into renewable fuel or bio-char to improve soil. Cities can join the co-op and provide biomass for conversion into fuel, which can then be sold on the open market. OGS is planning to open 100 plants statewide. Gabriole Van Bryce stated that non-point source pollution is a huge issue in Miami Beach and would like to know how OGS can help the City. Mr. Boshears stated his interested in starting a pilot program at an individual park or golf course to demonstrate his product. John Oldenburg, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreational Department, explained that the City is already using vegetable-based organic products at selected parks. Commissioner Gongora would like to see a comparison of OGS product to what is currently used in order for the Committee to make a recommendation. Mr. Oldenburg also requested that research and cost analysis should be provided by OGS in order for the City to consider working with company. ACTION: Ms. Van Bryce made a motion for OGS to meet with staff to discuss product viability in the City of Miami Beach and for OGS to present a more concrete proposal to the Committee. Motion seconded by Luiz Rodrigues. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Reforestation Plan. Mr. John Oldenburg provided an update on the City's Reforestation Plan. In 2007, the City enacted a Reforestation Plan in reaction to numerous destructive hurricanes and storms. The goal of the Plan is to have 5,000 trees planted in the City ROW and supplement Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) projects over the next 5 years. Commissioner Gongora inquired whether trees that are replaced during CIP projects count toward the Reforestation Plan. Mr. Oldenburg stated that trees included in CIP projects are not counted toward the reforestation target of 5,000 new trees. Mr. Oldenburg sits on Miami-Dade County Community Imagery Advisory Board and chairs the Street Tree Subcommittee, which discusses reforestation issues on a County-wide scale. The Street Tree Subcommittee has developed the Million Trees Miami Program with the goal to plant one million by 2020 and establish a 30% overall canopy coverage Countywide. Ms. Botero explained that increased canopy helps to alleviate heat island effect in urban areas, reduce stormwater runoff, and capture carbon, reducing greenhouse gases. Mr. Oldenburg explained that the City's proposed Tree Ordinance will begin the Commission approval process (e.g. Miami-Dade County, Planning, and Finance committes) in Fall 2011. The Ordinance proposes to assume the role of Miami-Dade County's Department of Environmental Management's (DERM) in tree permitting and place this function under City jurisdiction. Jack Haime of Bio Planet USA (nonprofit) and a fellow tree subcommittee member, explained that his company would like the Million Tree Miami campaign to become a movement for change and asked for the Committee's support. Mr. Haime explained that NYC and LA are the only other cities that have a similar

campaign. Mr. Rodrigues asked if the plan includes mangroves. Mr. Oldenburg stated that it is difficult to find suitable locations where mangroves will flourish, but was open to the idea. Mr. Rodrigues stated that ECOMB would like to participate in the Million Tree Miami campaign. ACTION: Mr. Haime will send staff information about the Million Tree Miami campaign to be distributed to the Committee.

- c) Lisa Botero presented an overview of her Together Green fellowship. Through her fellowship, she is conducting a dune conservation and restoration project. The project also includes conservation action, outreach and policy recommendations. The goal is to develop a conservation model that other municipalities can replicate to address habitat restoration using volunteers. In addition, the project seeks to engage new and more diverse audiences and build a network between the City and volunteers.
- d) Cork Friedman, Chairperson of the Waterfront Protection Committee, discussed sea turtles conservation in Miami Beach. Mr. Friedman is working on a documentary to educate the public regarding sea turtle nesting in Miami Beach. Miami-Dade County Parks Department runs a program that inspects the beach daily for nesting activity and monitors the success of the habitat. Mr. Friedman explained that the main issues threatening sea turtle are human disturbance, concessionaire equipment and urban lighting illuminating the beachfront.

3. Economic Development & Planning

Kevin Crowder, Economic Development Director, provided the Committee with an EcoZone update. The Governor's Energy Office has awarded the City a \$30,000 grant to establish a baseline report, implementation plan and communications strategy for the Sustainability Plan/Ecozone Workplan. It is anticipated that these components will be completed by December 2011. Also, an Ordinance to establish EcoZone incentive criteria will be brought to City Commission by March 2012. **ACTION: Kevin will provide update at future meetings.**

4. New Business

- a. General Sustainability Committee Recess
- b. Recycling Ordinance will be going back to the Finance and Citywide Projects Committee in September. The Recycling Sub-committee needs to review the Recycling Ordinance and provide recommendations.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM.

The proceedings of this meeting have been recorded. Please contact Patricia Bocio at 305.673.7080 or phocio@miamibeachfl.gov for more information.

FHB/RSW/LEB/ESW/PB

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